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How Choice Helps Obama Win the White House Choice Can Move Key Blocs of Women Voters to Obama

To: Interested Parties

From: Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research

While choice will not be the defining issue of the 2008 presidential election, nor the central critique of John McCain overall, it is an issue that can play an important role in building Barack Obama's winning coalition. For key blocs of women voters—specifically pro-choice Republican and Independent women—choice creates a sharp contrast between the two candidates and is a deciding issue.

A recent survey by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research¹ for NARAL Pro-Choice America in 12 key presidential battleground states² shows that the issue of choice can have a measurable impact on the presidential election. The survey shows that:

1. Choice can have a real impact on the presidential race.

- Once balanced information about Obama and McCain's respective positions on choice is introduced, Obama gains 6 points, with his overall lead in these twelve states expanding from a net 2 points (47 – 45 percent) to a net 13 points (53 – 40 percent).
- Obama gains 13 points among pro-choice Independent women (who make up 9 percent of this electorate) and 9 points among pro-choice Republican women (who account for 5 percent of this electorate). When these groups are combined, this movement equates to a gain of 1.6 points overall in the general election race against McCain.

2. Choice is an issue that moves key blocs of women voters to Obama.

- **Moves the swing vote** by drawing Independent women toward Obama.
- **Generates crossover support** by moving pro-choice Republican women toward Obama.
- **Consolidates the base** by bringing home Democratic women.

¹ This survey of 1,788 likely November voters (1,000 representative likely voters plus oversamples of 424 likely-voting Republican women and 364 likely-voting Independent women) was conducted May 29th – June 8th, 2008. The sample is subject to a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points.

² The survey was conducted in the states of Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

3. Choice is the top issue for moving pro-choice Republican and Independent women to Obama, trumping other traditional Democratic issues and attacks on McCain.

- Among pro-choice Independent women, pro-choice Republican women, and liberal to moderate Republican women, the issue of abortion produces a larger advantage for Democrats than the economy, the war in Iraq, or health care.
- Among pro-choice Independent women, pro-choice Republican women, and liberal-to-moderate Republican women, critiques on McCain's anti-choice position are the strongest attacks against him, trumping attacks on the economy, the war, and special interests.

■ **Table 1:** Shift in vote after balanced choice positioning statements; percent responding

Key Blocs of Women Shift to Obama After Choice Positioning

	Initial Vote, Obama – McCain	Re-Vote, Obama - McCain	Net Shift
Total Electorate	47 – 45	53 – 40	+11
Pro-Choice Independent Women	53 – 35	66 – 26	+22
Pro-Choice Republican Women	18 – 76	27 – 67	+18
Liberal-to-Moderate Republican Women	18 – 76	30 – 63	+25
Independent Women	43 – 43	52 – 38	+14
Democratic Women	80 – 12	86 – 6	+12
Non-College Women	49 – 41	56 – 36	+12
Older Women	48 – 41	55 – 37	+11
Suburban Women	51 – 44	55 – 39	+9

Now let me ask you again about the election for president in November, if the election for president were held today and the candidates were (ROTATE) Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain -- for whom would you vote, Democrat Barack Obama or Republican John McCain?

NARAL Pro-Choice America's track record of success and commitment to running smart, targeted campaigns positions them as the organization best suited to persuade and turn out these key pro-choice swing voters for Obama. In 2006, NARAL's efforts among pro-choice women voters had a measurable, positive impact on races in Arizona, Pennsylvania, and Iowa, directly resulting in more pro-choice members of Congress and helping shift the balance of power in Washington.

This survey demonstrates that NARAL Pro-Choice America has a real opportunity to build on the successes of 2006 and impact the 2008 presidential race by injecting choice into the debate in a smart, targeted manner. The issue of choice is powerful among specific, targeted blocs of the electorate and can influence the outcome of what could be a very close race in November.

Appendix A: Methodology

Greenberg Quinlan Rosner designed and administered this telephone survey conducted by professional interviewers. The survey reached 1788 adults, 18 years or older, who indicated that they had voted in the 2004 presidential election and planned to vote in the 2008 election. The survey was conducted May 29-June 8, 2006.

Telephone numbers were generated by a random digit dial process, thereby allowing access to all listed and unlisted phones. The sample was stratified by state. Quotas were assigned to reflect state population sizes. The likely voter representative sample of 1000 was supplemented with oversamples of 424 Republican Women respondents, and 364 Independent Women respondents. The data were weighted by gender, age, race, education, party identification and state to ensure an accurate reflection of the population. The sample size with these weights applied is 1000.

In interpreting survey results, all sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error; that is, the results of a survey may differ from those which would be obtained if the entire population were interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of responses to a particular question. For example, if a response to a given question to which all respondents answered was 50%, we could be 95% confident that the true percentage would fall within plus or minus 3.1% of this percentage or between 46.9% and 53.1%.

Appendix B: Candidates' Positions on Choice

Barack Obama believes that the decision to have an abortion is profoundly difficult for women and families, and that these decisions are personal, between a woman, her family, her God, and her doctor, and that politicians should stay out of it. As president, Obama will oppose any constitutional amendment to overturn Roe v. Wade, and he will work to reduce unintended pregnancies through prevention and education by expanding access to birth control and sex education.

John McCain is pro-life and on the issue of abortion, he opposes a woman's right to choose. McCain says that quote "abortion is a human tragedy," and he believes that we must end abortion by overturning Roe v. Wade. As president, he will nominate Supreme Court judges who will vote to overturn Roe v. Wade and return the issue to the states to decide.

Appendix C: Critiques of McCain

	<i>Pro-Choice Republican Women</i>		<i>Pro-Choice Independent Women</i>	
	Very Serious Doubts	Total Serious Doubts	Very Serious Doubts	Total Serious Doubts
McCain opposes abortion for many women, even in cases of rape, incest or when a woman's life is in danger.	30	71	42	83
McCain has voted repeatedly against allowing women to obtain birth control.	27	61	41	79
McCain supports two trillion dollars in new tax cuts for big corporations and the wealthy, while cutting services for many middle class families.	21	57	36	77
McCain is committed to keeping us in the war in Iraq, which would cost another trillion dollars over his term in office -- money that can be better used to solve some of our problems here at home.	20	49	38	72
<i>Now let me read you a series of statements that could be used to describe Republican John McCain. For each statement, please tell me whether this description raises very serious doubts, serious doubts, minor doubts or no real doubts in your own mind about John McCain.</i>				